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STUDYING THE SEA: THE EMERGENCE AND ASSERTION OF OCEANOGRAPHY IN PORTUGAL.

Oceanography gained its footing within the "national scientific policy" in the late 60's of the 20th century as a strategy to stimulate scientific and economic growth in Portugal, thanks to its prestige and its effective promotion of technical scientific development, giving the country a place in an area seen as inherent to the national calling itself, strengthened and legitimized in the light of the historical and maritime calling of the Portuguese nation.

Oceanography, as an interdisciplinary area aiming to achieve a scientific definition of the "sea policy", has a strong tradition in Portugal, intertwined with the history of cartography and meteorology, with added concerns for navigation safety and the need to know the seabed, it benefited from the charisma and scientific eminence of great of men - many of them from the military, with technical and scientific careers, as illustrated by, among many others, the case of Afonso Chaves.

Framing scientific research institutionally within the field of maritime biology and encouraging its development came with the construction of the Vasco da Gama Aquarium in 1898, inaugurated on the occasion of the fourth centenary of the discovery of the maritime route to India. The Aquarium was created as an institution of "public usefulness", and a few years later received special support from the Society of Natural Sciences, which had King D. Carlos as its Honorary President. The fact that the Vasco da Gama Aquarium was meant for "citizens" and the education of the people, and not directly for scientific research, showed the need for the existence of a Maritime Biology Station. This station was eventually created in 1913, under the authority of the Director General of the Navy, but with technical and scientific management by the Portuguese Society of Natural Sciences. In 1918, the Vasco da Gama Aquarium was formally converted into a maritime biology station.

Following World War II, in a context of debate and assertion of the role of science and scientific research in Portugal, the Maritime Biology Station split from the Vasco da Gama Aquarium and became the Institute of Maritime Biology, directly dependent from the Director General of the Navy, with Afonso Magalhães Ramalho as president. Its scientific work would be mostly devoted to the issues concerning fishery. In 1956, the Center for the Study of Biological Oceanography was created, incorporated in the Guis Marine Laboratory of the Lisbon Faculty of Sciences, mainly meant to train specialized researchers.

A few years later, Oceanography was mentioned as a strategic option within the framework of the mission to coordinate the national scientific policy given to the Aut-